

picture, but to paint it in brighter colours would be false to history."

The establishment of an effective police in the Santa Hermandad, or Brotherhood for the maintenance of order, the promulgation of countless pragmáticas, or royal ordinances, for the better administration of the kingdom, the codification of the laws and the reform of the administration of justice initiated by the Cortes of Toledo, the establishment of a strong military force, the limitation of the vast power of the Church, the augmentation of the royal revenue by the confiscation of the lands wrested from the crown, by the royal appropriation of the grandmastership of the rich and powerful military orders, and by the great development of trade and agriculture, were the more potent factors in the institution of the powerful centralised authority which made Spain the strong monarchy of the opening years of the sixteenth century. The conquest of Granada, by completing the fusion of Spanish territory, greatly enhanced this authority. Thus the evolution of its constitutional history resulted in Spain, as in France and Italy in the fifteenth century, in the triumph of the monarchic power at the expense of that of both nobles and commons.

In Spain, as in France, it was a salutary development in view of the abuses of faction and anarchy inherent in the old mediaeval constitution. A strong centralised authority was indispensable to the maintenance of order and prosperity. Individual and class interests might suffer; the interest of the whole gained for the time being. The picture has, however, another side. The suppression of anarchy might and did prove, in the grasping hands of a Ferdinand, a Charles, a Philip, the specious pretext for the exercise of arbitrary power, might and did pave the way for a modern despotism, as withering in its effects as mediaeval anarchy. To suppress freedom along with anarchy was to stunt the moral and material progress of the nation, to induce a condition of dead uniformity, impotence, equally fatal to the national development. The most nefarious fruit of this access of centralisation was the access of sanguinary bigotry, which effectively stifled freedom of thought and conscience in a country which, apart from the crusading spirit against the infidel, had not till then been con-